

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 743

By Harper

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Mrs. Mary Rita Jones of Franklin.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the untimely death of Mrs. Mary Rita Jones; and

WHEREAS, Mary was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for her fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, a longtime resident of Williamson County, Mary Rita Jones was a highly respected member of the Franklin community and the state of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, known far and wide for her numerous contributions as a breast cancer survivor, oncology nurse, and cancer patient advocate, Mary Rita Jones was an esteemed graduate of the University of Alabama in Huntsville and the St. Vincent School of Nursing, where she earned the Florence Nightingale Award, served as Student Body President during her senior year, and held certifications in Oncology and Plastic Surgery Nursing; and

WHEREAS, she was a registered nurse and patient counselor with Nashville Plastic Surgery and had been an Oncology Certified Nurse since December 1991; originally diagnosed

with breast cancer in 1998, Mary was also a fighter and a caring advocate for those who were experiencing similar circumstances; and

WHEREAS, while in remission, Mary turned her own experience into a personal mission of helping others; after serving as a nurse at the Williamson Medical Center for thirteen years, she joined Nashville Plastic Surgery as a patient counselor where she used her proficient background as an oncology nurse and shared what she personally learned about breast cancer and reconstruction as a patient with women facing the same situation; she doled out hugs along with the latest information on procedures like TRAM flaps and on reconstructive devices such as implants; and

WHEREAS, she founded and worked with Breast Cancer Support Groups at Baptist Hospital, Williamson Medical Center, Maury Regional Hospital and Dickson Hospital. She was also the co-founder and first President of the Tennessee Breast Cancer Coalition, a member of the National Breast Cancer Coalition, the Breast Cancer Spokesperson for the Tennessee Chapter of the American Cancer Society, a board member of the American Cancer Society of Williamson County, and a member of the American Cancer Society for Breast Cancer's Mission 2000 Core Committee for the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, named as the Susan G. Komen Foundation's 1999 "Local Hero", Mary Jones was a founding committee member for the Nashville chapter of the Susan G. Komen Foundation, where she tirelessly promoted the Susan G. Komen Mission Statement as part of her own personal mission: "To eradicate breast cancer as a life-threatening disease by advancing research, education, screening, and treatment"; and

WHEREAS, during the year 2000, it is projected that 182,800 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer, and 40,800 women will die of breast cancer; for women ages 40-59, breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths. It is the leading cancer site among American women and is second only to lung cancer in cancer deaths; and

WHEREAS, frightening statistics such as these and the lack of information and resources available when Mary was first diagnosed, led her to form the Tennessee Breast

Cancer Coalition, a grassroots organization that lobbies, educates, and provides support, monthly meetings, and advocacy for patients and survivors of this dreaded disease; as president of the TBCC from 1995-96, Mary successfully led the lobby for insurance companies to pay for symmetry surgery for breast cancer patients in the state of Tennessee. She was also named as the 1999 "Champion of Women" by the Nashville Women's Political Caucus and Tennessee Breast Cancer Coalition for these and her many other contributions in the fight against breast cancer; and

WHEREAS, Mary Jones was very vocal in her fight against breast cancer; she called for more equality in cancer research, stressed the need for more research money, and always encouraged breast cancer patients and survivors to attend breast cancer support meetings; and

WHEREAS, she was professionally active as a member of the Oncology Nursing Society; the Middle Tennessee Chapter of Oncology Nursing, where she served as Society Secretary from 1992-94 and as Vice President from 1995-96; the National Biotherapy Study Group; the Society for Biological Therapy, where she served for many years as Co-Chair of the Advisory Board for the Biological Therapy Institute; and the American Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgical Nurses; and

WHEREAS, she gave numerous professional presentations, some of her many engaging and informational workshops and speeches were entitled, "Cancer Survivorship", "Cancer Survivors Celebration," "Breast Cancer, Treatment of and Breast Reconstruction Options," "Caring for the Cancer Patient and Coping with the Process," "Cancer Survivorship in the 90's," "Pros and Cons in Breast Implants," and "Nursing Management Concerns for Head Nurses in Oncology Nursing," among many others too numerous to mention; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Jones was an active and devout member of the St. Philip Catholic Church, where she worshipped and served her Lord faithfully for many years; and

WHEREAS, Mary Jones was also deeply devoted to her family, and she always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Jones enjoyed the loving companionship of her devoted husband, Stephen R. Jones, and was the proud parent of David and Christina Jones; she was the loving daughter of Mrs. Mary Buckley of Huntsville, Alabama and the late Francis J. Buckley, Jr.; and

WHEREAS, her loving spirit and presence will also be sorely missed by her brother, Frank Buckley, her sisters, Patricia Jones, Maureen Lee, and Regina Crump, her numerous friends, neighbors, relatives, and her many colleagues and patients; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Mary Jones leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we honor the memory of Mrs. Mary Rita Jones, of Franklin, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character, her many accomplishments, including those in the fight against breast cancer, and her stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mrs. Mary Jones.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.